

## **REMARKS**

This responds to the Office Action mailed on September 3, 2003.

Applicant confirms the election of claims 1-5 in this case and has canceled claims 6-9 without prejudice to the filing of a divisional application. Initially, Applicant's counsel notes that the Examiner acknowledges receipt of three Information Disclosure Statements and consideration thereof, but further notes for the Examiner's information that Applicant filed a fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement with a Certificate of Mailing date of July 16, 2003. Acknowledgement of this last Information Disclosure Statement in the next Office Action would be appreciated.

By way of the amendments made in this paper, only independent claim 5 and new dependent claims 10 and 11 remain pending in this application. For this reason, the rejections contained in Sections 7, 9, 11 and 12 are now moot in that they pertain to only canceled claims.

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Page, U.S. Patent No. 3,981,650. Claim 5 has been amended such that it is now directed specifically to a meltblowing apparatus. In addition, the first liquid outlets and second liquid outlets are now set forth to be arranged in "linear arrays." Finally, claim 5 recites "each second outlet tangentially meeting with a corresponding one of said first liquid outlets." The Examiner will recognize that this incorporates the subject matter of canceled claim 3 into claim 5.

In reviewing the Page patent with respect to claim 5, it is important to note that Page discloses a meltblowing structure having alternating openings for discharging

separate filaments each formed of a different polymer. These are shown as openings 22c and 23c in Fig. 4. They are also shown in Fig. 5, although not as clearly due to the perspective nature of Fig. 5. However, the specification of the Page patent makes it precisely clear that Page's objective was to extrude side-by-side filaments which will alternately be of different polymers. This is noted in column 4, lines 5-11, for example, of the Page patent:

The slots 29 communicate with alternate lower portions of the passages 31 and the slots 30 communicate with other alternate lower portions of the slots 31 so that as filaments emerge from the openings at the bottom of the die head, the filaments will alternately be of a different polymer.

Thus, Page is not directed to the formation of so-called "bicomponent" or "multi-component" filaments but, rather, each filament is solely formed from a single polymer although alternate filaments will be of different polymers. Claim 5 recites that corresponding pairs of first and second liquid outlets "tangentially meet" and, thus, the first and second liquids combine at the paired outlets to form multi-component filaments. This tangential meeting of the first and second liquid outlets is clearly shown in Figs. 4 and 5 of the present application.

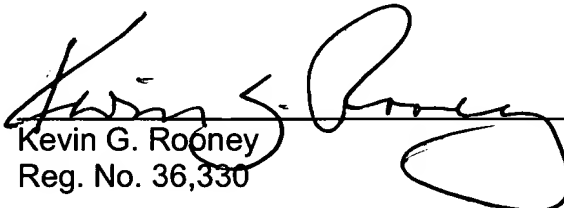
On page 7, lines 14-15 of the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that "the first and second outlets [of Page] respectively tangentially meet at an external surface of the die tip (Fig. 5)." Applicant asserts that Fig. 5 of Page is not clear enough to make the determination that the openings formed at the lower ends of tubes 45, 46 "tangentially meet." Moreover, reading the entire disclosure of Page in context clearly leads to the conclusion that Page's outlets do not tangentially meet to form multi-

component filaments as claimed, but instead alternate as completely separate orifices or openings such that completely separate filaments of different polymers are formed in the manner quoted above from the Page patent. There is no indication by Page that the embodiment shown in Fig. 5 functions or operates differently than the other described embodiments of Page and also no indication that the outlet openings tangentially meet or intersect to thereby produce multi-component filaments. Applicant therefore submits that the Page reference fails to anticipate, disclose or suggest the invention set forth in independent claim 5 and dependent claims 10 and 11. For these reasons, the Examiner should withdraw the rejection and pass this case to issue.

If the Examiner believes any matter requires further discussion, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the matter may be promptly resolved.

Applicants do not believe that any fees are due in connection with this response other than the extension fee. However, if such petition is due or any fees are necessary, the Commissioner may consider this to be a request for such and charge any necessary fees to deposit account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,  
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